

**TOWN OF LA POINTE
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 10, 2012
AT 11:00 AM AT TOWN HALL**

Called to order at 11:10 AM

Present: Jim Patterson, Ham Ross, Larry Whalen, Greg Nelson

Absent: Nick Nelson

Public Present: Glenn Carlson, Mike Starck

The purpose of this meeting is to interview Pete Clark, who is a candidate for the position of Town Administrator. His answers to the following questions appear in bold face.

Where did you hear about this position? **Clark states that he received an email from Marty Meyer [former town assessor]**

What have you done since to learn more about the challenges you will face if you get this job? **Clark states that he lived on the Island earlier in his life and has a sense & understanding of the Island. He has also read the minutes of the Town Board as well as the various committees and has read the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.**

What are some things your current (or previous) employer could do differently to be more successful? **Clark states that he has worked in business, government and public relations, and that he feels that many things have gone right in his previous positions. In his jobs he has faced the same issues facing the Town of La Pointe [funding]. He feels that previous employers could have done a better job in gaining public support for programs.**

Why have you decided to leave your current job? **Clark states that in his previous position there was difficulty with funding; vouchers were delayed which made the job difficult. He feels the program was successful [Clark worked with businesses to get micro-loans for start-up small businesses; this was part of the process of getting Small Business Administration loans.**

If not your current job, what job in your past do you think most resembles the requirements of this position? **Clark states that there is no single job that he could point to; rather, all of them have given him experience & understanding taken together.**

What adjectives would your current (previous) employer use to describe you? **Clark responds: affable, determined, diligent, thoughtful, articulate, smart. He feels that he rises quickly in positions because he is determined to effect positive change.**

Think of someone you have had problems with in your career, as we all do, who you would NEVER use a reference. What adjectives might they use to describe you? **Clark responds: determined, short, unwaivering**

Describe a time when you hired (or fired) the wrong person. **Clark refers to a time when he was instructed to fire a person and did not feel that was an appropriate response. He tried to use compassion. Clark states that he is proud of his hiring and cannot think of a bad hire.**

How do you alleviate stress? **Clark states that he walk.**

Are you more likely to cause stress in others v. them causing you stress? **Clark responds: neither. He feels that done properly this job doesn't have to be stress-inducing. He also feels that process has a lot to do with stress. He states that he will be careful but take every opportunity to advance the goals of the Town of La Pointe.**

What tools or habits do you use to keep organized? **Clark responds that he uses a notebook and takes voluminous notes.**

What are the first 5 things you would do if you got this position? **Clark begins by pointing out that there are five board members so that his first task would be to get a view and clear understanding from each member as to a detailed job description. He adds that communication would be all of the first five: getting a clear understanding from the Board members, the department heads and staff. He seeks to "get his arms around" the position and get a full & comprehensive view before attempting change. He wants to be aware of the sensitivities and abilities of all Town employees.**

Larry Whalen asks if Clark is a content or process person.

Clark states that content is a function of process, that process drives content: if the Town Board has all the information needed to make good legislation, then folks may not like the legislation, but they can't argue with the process. If the process is contentious then the outcome will be as well. If the Town Administrator ensures good process, then the content will be positive.

What are the things you do NOT like to do, and not want to work on? **Clark responds: nothing. He states that he has spoken extensively to Barb [Assistant Administrator/Deputy Clerk] and feels that they will complement each other. He further states that he enjoys the "rigorous vetting of budget line items.**

How you would go about revising our (personnel policy handbook, comprehensive plan, zoning ordinances). **Clark responds: the personnel policy needs to be tightened; the Comprehensive Plan needs to be revisited every couple of years using actual, accurate numbers, which may have the effect of re-ordering priorities. Regarding Zoning, Clark refers to Conditional Use Permits [CUP's], based on his reading of the Handbook of Town Officials, Clark supports the Town's actions regarding CUP's. Clark refers to an agricultural district, points out that there is none, and asks rhetorically if there is a need for one. He concludes that these are "living documents." He adds that the word "shall" appears frequently in the Comprehensive Plan, which may need to be changed to reflect "real time."**

What unique experience or qualifications separate you from other candidates? **Chair Greg Nelson points out that this has already been covered.**

Are you more of a hands-on manager or a delegator? **Clark states that he tends to do things himself. He is not a delegator; that a Town Administrator needs to be**

“hands on” without micro-managing. The Town Administrator needs to be “up to his ears” in most things to ensure that the Town Board is well served. He plans to attend committee & department meetings to show Town Board support of those groups and to offer assistance to them. A Town Administrator that is hands-on will see trends developing and resolve issues ahead of contention.

What tasks will you do for the (town board/department heads) that they currently must do themselves? **[Clerk’s note: see above.]**

This position has been vacant for more than ten years, and we seem to have survived without it. Why do you think we should fill this position now? **Clark begins by saying that the world has become a complex place. He has had conversations with each staff member and feels that his job is to allow each officer and staff member to be more effective & efficient.**

How will you decide what matters need review by the Town Board, versus those matters you can resolve on your own? **Clark responds that the Town Administrator works at the pleasure & direction of the Town Board: the Town Board will charge the Town Administrator. Clark feels that many issues can be resolved without Town Board involvement, that he is a believer in a “rapid reponse,” that starting early can resolve an issue before it becomes a problem.**

Ham Ross asks how Clark would handle communication “on the street.” **Clark responds that the Town Administrator position is a “24/7” position. That talking to people on the street would be valuable. He then advised caution regarding open meeting laws.**

Larry Whalen asked if he is aware of what a walking quorum is.

Clark responded that he is, and that is why he mentioned open meeting laws.

Ham Ross asked how Clark felt about Special Town Board Meetings

Clark responded that he would have no problem calling one.

Ross asked his position on memos.

Clark responded that he will communicate regularly with each Town Board member in whatever form is preferred by each.

Assume you are a member of the Town Board, what question would you ask that we haven’t? **Clark spoke to the challenges & opportunities offered in the job. He stated that “the Town level is where real government occurs. He has a real dedication to making a positive difference. He views this as a rare opportunity to bring “civility” to government. He wishes to take a “humane, progressive & fiscally responsible” approach to the job. The challenge will be to “make a dime do a dollar’s work.” He wishes to instill confidence in government, in the process by which things are done. He named “expansion of health care, assisted living and affordable housing” as some potential goals.**

What is your comfort level of daily operation – dress for success, casual attire, informal, casual Fridays, etc. **Clark states that the dress should be appropriate to the day’s schedule. He prefers casual, but the Town Administrator is the “face of the Town,” and as such he will dress in a way that shows respect for Town government.**

How do you operate your daily work – support staff needed, independent, resourceful, get things myself or “I’ll have my coffee now”? **Clark characterized his work style as**

independent but collaborative. He would solicit ideas rather than saying, “Do this for me.” He requires no support staff.

What kind of work atmosphere are you used to? Quiet, private space, right in the thick of things, etc.? **The Chair states that this has been covered.**

Can you handle an “open door” type of atmosphere? **Clark responds: “Sure, and the nature of government demands it.”**

Ham Ross asks Clark about records requests.

Clark responds by saying that “the law is the law.” He adds that he is a paralegal and can read legislation effectively. He may be able to help the Town avoid some attorney’s fees.

Greg Nelson asks Clark if he has experience in grant writing.

Clark responds that he has written many grants before. Thirty years ago he got a grant for the Madeline Island Public Library in order to hold a lecture series on protecting water resources. He is happy to write grants or assist in the writing of them.

What type of tasks are “beneath” you to perform? Cleaning up, snow shoveling, making coffee, helping the public, etc. **Clark responds that no tasks are beneath him; the Town Administrator needs to “check his/her ego at the door.”**

What type of office or space do you work best in? **Clark responds: a desk and a computer.**

What frustrates you the most in the work place? **Clark responds: “non-responsive.” He wants information to be available from outside sources when he needs it.**

Greg Nelson asks Clark about getting more people to attend Town Board meetings.

Clark responds by saying that he wishes to maximize participation in government: take the government to the people if necessary: be in the community, inform them, and solicit input. He recounts that he once visited 253 businesses in four days for the purpose of hearing what they had to say. He continued: what people think is important, and if they feel they will be listened to, they will show up.

What WI State Statutes are most applicable to LaPointe? **Clark responded: “62.everything!”** Clerk’s note: this is the chapter that specifies powers & responsibilities of a municipality.]

What reference sources would you bring or use to start out with? **Clark responded: a subscription to West Law would be helpful, the Handbook of Wisconsin Towns, a guide to the statutes, and a computer.**

Jim Patterson asked Clark to describe a successful experience in conflict resolution.

Clark responded: all of his experiences have taught him in this regard, especially to learn that conflict resolution is the ability to see both sides of an argument.

Jim Patterson asked Clark to evaluate how Governor Walker’s actions affect the Town.

Clark began by describing himself as a progressive, a populist and a pragmatist. He continued by saying that if the figures are accurate, then Walker has not performed well at job creation. He added that stripping bargaining rights from public employees was aggressive but also affects the financial stability of municipalities. Regarding the environment, he applauds the Town for its stance on the Penokee Mine issue, adding that on the Island environment is everything, particularly economically.

Closes by thanking the town for the potential opportunity to work in this extraordinary place.

Motion to adjourn: HR/GN
Adjourned at 12:48 PM
Submitted by Patty Hobin, Town Clerk

Approved as submitted on July 31, 2012
Patty Hobin, Town Clerk